

Address Questions 1 & 4.

As we look to the new farm bill we need to address the issues of the WTO's problems with Ag subsidies, my feeling is we need to move more to a market oriented approach that would reward producers for conservation practices and environmental management approaches.

As the prices producers receive continue to be effected by our ability to export our products we must realize that the rest of the world is looking more at environmental aspects. Being able to reassure our customers that we are good environmental stewards needs to be continually reinforced. Much like the Presidential order for all Gov't agency's to implement an environmental management system, one possible path would be to take a proactive approach to use this recognized EMS system in the new farm bill. USDA could partner with producers to implement AG EMS's, much like a CSP program, to overcome both the subsidy issues and help reassure our customers that we are indeed showing and documenting continued environmental improvements at the farm level. Ag EMS's could be the US recognized standard much like the ISO 14,000's are in the International arena.

While we as producers feel we are good environmental stewards, we are very poor in telling this and have even less ability to document improvement. Through the use of Ag EMS's we, USDA and U.S. Ag producers, could maximize U.S. competitiveness and help our ability to compete in the global market place, along with looking to the future by setting both conservation and environmental improvement goals in the new farm bill and future farm bills.